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Benjamin F. Gue

In 1955 Iowa's gifted MacKinlay Kantor published his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Andersonville*. The appearance of this volume on the eve of the centennial of the Civil War struck a responsive chord in the hearts of many Iowans for one of the most beautiful memorials at Andersonville honors the two hundred Iowa dead who slumber there.

One of the first stories about Andersonville and the Iowa soldiers buried there was written by Benj. F. Gue and appeared in the *Iowa State Register* on May 30, 1884. Born in New York State in 1828, Gue came to Scott County, Iowa, in 1852. He was an ardent Abolitionist and quickly identified himself with the Republican Party, which he helped form in 1856. He was elected a Representative to the Seventh General Assembly in 1857, re-elected in 1859, and elected to the Senate in 1861. At the close of his term in 1864, Gue moved to Fort Dodge where he bought and published the only newspaper in that town.

Gue was elected Lieutenant Governor of Iowa on the Republican ticket, serving from 1866 to 1868. In 1872 he removed to Des Moines where he became editor of the *Iowa Homestead*. President Grant appointed him United States Pension Agent for Iowa and Nebraska. After eight years he retired and returned to the *Homestead*.

His trip to Andersonville in 1884 made a deep impression on Gue and his vivid newspaper account was widely read. When the Iowa Monument was dedicated at Andersonville on November 17, 1906, it was fitting that Benj. F. Gue should tell the story of Andersonville, using the manuscript he had written on his first visit twenty-two years before — in 1884. Two years later, in 1908, in compliance with a Concurrent Resolution adopted by the Thirty-second General Assembly, the ceremonies and speeches made on the occasion of the dedication of the monuments at Andersonville, Chattanooga, Shiloh, and Vicksburg, were compiled and published in a handsome volume entitled — *Dedication of Monuments Erected by the State of Iowa*.

The story which follows, with the list of Iowa soldiers buried at Andersonville, is taken verbatim from the *Iowa State Register* on May 30, 1884.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN